

THE WHITE HOUSE

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MINUTES OF WSAG MEETING

PARTICIPANTS:

Secretary of State, Henry A. Kissinger  
Secretary of Defense, James Schlesinger  
Director of Central Intelligence, William Colby  
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Admiral Thomas Moorer  
Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Joseph Sisco  
Ambassador Robert McCloskey, The Secretary's Staff  
Deputy Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, Major General Brent Scowcroft  
Commander Jonathan T. Howe, NSC Staff

DATE AND TIME:

Sunday, November 4, 1973  
11:10 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

PLACE:

The Situation Room  
The White House

Secretary Kissinger: I apologize for calling you in on a Sunday, but I wanted to bring you up to date on the state of negotiations with the Egyptians and the Israelis before I head off on my trip. If the people here don't hold together, we haven't got a prayer. And I want to get your judgments on these issues.

As you know, our long-range strategy has been to get the Arabs to turn to us. We've been trying to convince them that we're the ones who can deliver for them. We promise less than the Soviets, but we can deliver. In a sense, this situation has been achieved by the evolution of the Arab-Israeli war. Politically it is more or less proven by the fact that practically all of the Arabs, of whatever persuasion, have come to us and want to deal with us. I have told the Egyptian Foreign Minister that anything demanded by the Soviets on his behalf would automatically be rejected by us. The Egyptians will have to deal with us directly.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

2

The Soviets have tried two things during the past week. First, they suggested that a joint U. S. -Soviet team of ambassadors be sent to the area to supervise the ceasefire and act as contacts for getting negotiations started. I got the Egyptians to turn that off. The second suggestion was that white painted helicopters be sent in to supply the Third Army. I turned this off by saying to the Soviets that I was doing this already with the Egyptians. We got the Egyptians to send back 35 of the 70 Soviets who had been sent in as "observers." I based that number on the fact that the largest observer delegation was 35 from Sweden. The Soviets claimed they were working against us.

Secretary Schlesinger: How true.

Secretary Kissinger: So this is the strategy, one which we hope will get the oil embargo off. If the Israelis were rational they would recognize that this is in their interests. But they think they can stay on every square inch of territory they have taken. They should work with us. If they were a little more subtle there is a lot we could do and perhaps work out a fallback. They could even claim we forced them. But they are not willing to do this.

The October 22 line is only part of the problem. But the Arabs have made a test case of what we can or cannot deliver. This is probably a mistake on their part. There is, by the way, a very perceptive Heykal article which has just been published. Have you seen it?

Ambassador McCloskey:[Most of the groups says "no."] I have seen excerpts.

Secretary Kissinger: It talks about the weaknesses of the President, long-term U. S. strategy, and makes the point that October 22 is the test case. But it has a phrase about wrapping this into a general disengagement. In other words, there is the idea of October 22 and then a long-range move. ✓

With respect to what we proposed to Fahmi, it was basically this: Israel and Egypt would negotiate about where the line was, and while this was going on the Israelis would let non-military supplies through on the roads under UN auspices. If pulling back to the October 22 lines means opening roads to the Third Army, only non-military supplies would be sent in under UN auspices. There would be an exchange of prisoners and the blockade at the mouth of the Red Sea would be lifted.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

3

Secretary Schlesinger: There is no blockade.

Director Colby: A Japanese ship got in.

Secretary Kissinger: Yes, the Egyptians told me they were going to let one through. But I believe it was Liberian. The Egyptians have been vague about when the POWs would be released. The Israelis, of course, want it when the road is opened. The Egyptians want it only when the Israelis withdraw to the October 22 ceasefire line. But the Egyptians have essentially accepted the proposition, except for their vagueness on the question of when the POWs would be released. The Israelis have rejected it. Each of these points, by the way, represents several hours of effort talking to them.

On Friday night, it was a tea party. Israel accepted in principle the idea that the roads would be under UN supervision. Joe Sisco was there. No one said that it was a contingent agreement on their part. Yet yesterday they withdrew it totally. Now all they are willing to accept is a POW swap and are willing to assure that non-military supplies can flow on their roads.

Secretary Schlesinger: Is that contingency consistent with their turnaround on equipment? They have even blown their relationship with Keating on that one and that is hard to do.

Secretary Kissinger: Undoubtedly it is related. [To Sisco] Do you have the text of their formulation on October 22? They talked about disengagement of forces.

Secretary Sisco: [Reading from notes]: The question of the October 22 line can be discussed with the question of separation and disengagement of forces.

Secretary Kissinger: I don't think Sadat can accept that. I can say that that is all they delivered.

Secretary Sisco: You can say there has been a tremendous bloodletting.

Secretary Kissinger: What needs to be done is substantial disengagement. Israel can't stay on the West Bank forever, but for us to take on the domestic problem at this time is suicide. I can say that the pressures for October 22

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

4

are not much less than they would be for getting the Israelis off the West Bank. They should live with this, and we will try to shift October 22 to general disengagement. By linking it to the general disengagement scheme, it gets the Israelis off the West Bank and into the Sinai. We would work hard for this in January and get it done by April.

What I think we need to do now is get organized and then we can slug the Israelis. But it will kill us if we try to do this while we are travelling. Golda feels that she won the war. And when you put this in the equation, she goes back to biblical times. [Sisco nods in agreement.] Can Sadat afford to say he gave up POWs just to get the Third Army supplied? Can we get the oil embargo lifted this way?

Director Colby: He has to get more than that out of this.

Secretary Schlesinger: We could stop the airlift. [To the Israelis]

Secretary Kissinger: Yes. That can be a sweetner. It's still going on I trust.

Secretary Schlesinger: Yes.

Secretary Kissinger: Excellent. When you like my ideas, it is amazing what DOD is able to do.

Admiral Moorer: That hurts.

Secretary Kissinger: Seriously, it has proven invaluable in carrying out our strategy. I have tried to get across to the Israelis that they are screwing themselves if Sadat goes back to the Soviets. What the Israelis have done apparently is to decide that October 22 is important because the West Bank is important and they are going to stay in the Sinai. They could have been generous and gotten ready for disengagement. If we could have delivered something substantial to Sadat, it would have meant a significant shift in Egyptian policy. Now the Soviets will tell Sadat that he has been made a sucker by the United States.

Director Colby: And don't underestimate the Arab feeling about what a great guy you are. They will feel they have been suckered by you.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

5

Admiral Moorer: Sadat even said the U.S. was being constructive about the situation.

Secretary Kissinger: Shutting off the airlift will be a big step.

Secretary Schlesinger: We could just leave our aircraft at Lajes. Then they would not be taking off from Israel.

Secretary Kissinger: What the Israelis will give is not stable. They are prepared to have themselves frozen into a ridiculous position. I would rather have them in that position unless they are willing to withdraw to October 22. There just does not seem to be enough blood in the stone. I will tell Sadat that the airlift has ended as of Tuesday evening, and as a result the Israelis can't move.

Admiral Moorer: That's fine. That's what we were planning to do, to run it through the 6th.

Secretary Kissinger: Do the Israelis know that?

Secretary Schlesinger: Hell no.

Secretary Kissinger: Well then let's end it on the night of the 6th. We will just tell them to go to hell. You've got a big problem domestically, we've got a big problem domestically.

Ambassador McCloskey: The Arabs have a lot riding on you.

Secretary Kissinger: Sadat will not take the Israeli package. He can't afford it. He can't release the POWs just to get the road open. If he refused, then the Israelis will close the road. We will be in one hell of a position. We should be prepared to go to the UN with a package like the one we presented to the Israelis on Friday night. We would agree to a return to the October 22 line and a beginning of negotiations on that. There would also be a release of prisoners. Otherwise, the Third Army will be starving.

Secretary Schlesinger: We can resupply them ourselves. We were prepared to do that a week ago.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

6

Secretary Kissinger: Yes, but it was premature then. It was not necessary then. We could have all come in ahead. If we have a military airlift, then the Soviets will have their airlift. There is the concept of a UN helolift.

Secretary Schlesinger: We have the forces to airlift into Egypt, and we could get the plaudits.

Secretary Kissinger: Yes. But this would be matched by a unilateral Soviet arms lift. We had hoped that the flood gates of arms supplies would be closing. This would also mean an overt shifting of our policy to the Arabs.

Director Colby: We could drop supplies by air.

Secretary Schlesinger: And the Israelis would get half of them.

Secretary Kissinger: But the Soviets would come out ahead. I think we should keep it non-military with no great powers involved. I am not against using C-130s with UN inspectors checking the cargoes. In other words, we would do it under UN auspices, under UN supervision.

Director Colby: If the UN was running it, then it could be Russian.

Secretary Kissinger: It would be ideal to have no great powers. The next step would be the Soviets sending a unit in to open up the road. The pattern would be that the Soviets did it all.

Director Colby: We would have a UN resolution.

Secretary Schlesinger: What are we going to say to the Israelis?

Secretary Kissinger: I have told the Israelis. You should just stop all talks with the Israelis on resupply. Don't do it sharply, just terminate it by screwing it up. Just don't be available to talk to them.

25X1

Secretary Kissinger: Yes. But I don't want a public confrontation while I am travelling. We should keep loading up the ships and do any turning off of that later on. If the Israelis turn it into an October 22nd issue, they will

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

7

say our blood is on your head, we've lost because of you. We will have unleashed all of this for crap. What we need to do is get the Israelis to the Mitla Pass by April. We actually want to avoid October 22nd. The dumb thing the Israelis have done, from their point of view, is to link October 22 to general disengagement. If Sadat will play our game we could use general disengagement to get the big scheme accomplished.

Director Colby: If we could get something real for him, Sadat might be able to put his trust in U.S. support.

Secretary Kissinger: Sadat has a massive problem, not only domestically, but with people like the Syrians. They will be asking, was he snookered by Kissinger?

Director Colby: He could go public and say I have a commitment from the U.S.

Secretary Kissinger: We have to be very careful. We don't want the Israelis to run amuck before I leave Cairo. If they do, we will have a fierce problem.

Secretary Schlesinger: Until you return he could simply say we have certain arrangements.

Secretary Kissinger: No, that wouldn't be good. The Israelis will think we have struck a deal. We will face the Israelis after I get back, and we have had a chance to work on the Congress. I don't think they have as much strength in the Congress as some believe.

Admiral Moorer: I agree. The House will be opposed to them.

Secretary Kissinger: But it is stupid to fight before we get organized. Stennis came over after the breakfast with the Israelis the other morning and told me he would be with us. He didn't even know there had been a confrontation.

Secretary Schlesinger: And I think Symington would side with us too, surprisingly as that sounds.

Secretary Kissinger: Well, what we will have to do is get together and get organized, get the media lined up, talk to some people in the Jewish community and then slug the Israelis. But it still makes Sadat's problem unmanageable.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

8

Director Colby: You could use the end of the airlift.

Admiral Moorer: It's not going to hurt the Israelis.

Director Colby: I assume the averages are not going to be beyond pre-October 6 levels.

Secretary Kissinger: If it doesn't work, we will have to go to the UN while I am travelling. I want this group to backstop everything. Given the state of our government, you must have all the information and we will have to coordinate everything closely. Scowcroft will keep you all informed. If it goes to the UN, do we all agree that something must be done along the lines of the principle of return to October 22 and exchange of prisoners?

Secretary Schlesinger: They've already done that.

Secretary Sisco: We will spell it out a little more.

Secretary Kissinger: That's correct. We will spell it out in more detail and add to it. What is new is that pending final determination of the October 22nd line, the UN takes over the airlift of non-military supplies into the Third Army area. Do you all agree that this is the right course? It will be significant.

Director Colby: Do we have to have an airlift? Why not have it down the road?

Secretary Kissinger: But the Israelis have closed the road.

Secretary Schlesinger: It is possible that they would shoot down a UN aircraft.

Secretary Kissinger: In that case we would have to provide UN military protection for the aircraft. I told the Prime Minister that if Egypt takes it to the UN, the UN will organize a resupply. The UN will order UN resupply by air or along the roads. We can see if the Israelis try to stop convoys along the road, and then we could go to a UN airlift. It depends on our assessment of how long the Third Army can hold out.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE



TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

9

Secretary Sisco: I suspect that they would let a few supplies dribble through so they could starve it out, but not cut it off altogether.

Admiral Moorer: If the Israelis shoot down a UN plane, they would have grave problems with their world image. The Africans have already been after them.

Secretary Kissinger: If they do that, they will have to be sanctioned.

Director Colby: I am not sure they would interfere with a column either.

Secretary Kissinger: But it brings back memories of the Berlin syndrome.

Admiral Moorer: There will be all sorts of pressures when we start getting the horror stories about the Third Army being starved and not having water for their wounded.

Secretary Kissinger: We will have to have very strict discipline on public affairs. We can't shift prematurely in our strategy. What we give, we should do as acts of policy. The theme for Sadat will be to accept this and an end to the airlift.

Secretary Schlesinger: What about the sealift?

Secretary Kissinger: They don't know what that is. If it looks big, then we can cut it down, but I prefer not to touch that until we get to the Mitla Pass scenario.

Secretary Schlesinger: By April there will be lots of supplies in.

Secretary Kissinger: I am thinking more in terms of January. But I don't want to offer it now.

Secretary Schlesinger: We are shipping about twenty thousand tons a month. In a couple of months that will be quite a lot.

Admiral Moorer: We will front load it.

Secretary Kissinger: I want to offer it as a concession, like ending the airlift. When we end it we should get something for it. If Sadat accepts our plan, we're going to have a massive brawl in January. We'll have to use our allies and get the whole world demanding it. There should be quite a lot of support once we get going.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

10

Director Colby: And the airlift will be without the great powers.

Secretary Kissinger: Can we do that? I certainly would prefer it. The great powers could contribute to the supplies.

Secretary Schlesinger: The Turks might be good.

Secretary Kissinger: I prefer not to have the great powers. It would be a mugs game.

Secretary Sisco: We've abused the Turks over the last few years.

Secretary Kissinger: I'm going to let EUR do that from now on.

Secretary Sisco: That's fine with me. But we have done a poor job for the last few years.

Secretary Kissinger: How did we miss getting you on the NSC staff when we managed to get Sonnenfeldt?

Schlesinger: Is the Turkish Ambassador a good man?

Secretary Sisco: Very good.

Secretary Kissinger: Another thing we have to consider is how we're going to manage this, particularly how we are going to keep Scali under control.

Secretary Sisco: Scowcroft.

Secretary Kissinger: We have to insure that the problem is not driven by Scali's concerns. Joe [to Sisco], I want you to leave the text here for Scowcroft. Brent will have to insure that no one goes off it or deviates from it. Everyone will want to manipulate it.

Should we try the ground lift approach first or go right away to an airlift?

Secretary Sisco: I don't know what would be best.

Secretary Schlesinger and Admiral Moorer: Ground would seem preferable to try first.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

TOP SECRET/SECRET

11

Secretary Kissinger: My only concern is that if the convoy gets stopped then we'll have a Security Council resolution ordering the UN emergency force to escort it. The Israeli blockade will be broken on the ground. That may be harder on them than an airlift.

General Scowcroft: We could end up with a resolution of sanctions against Israel.

Director Colby: Not unless they shot at the UN convey.

Secretary Kissinger: The Egyptians might want to run in tanks, etc.

Director Colby: Not if the UN supervises.

Secretary Sisco: I am not convinced that the Israelis will prevent it.

Admiral Moorer: The first time the Egyptians tried to ship a convoy through, the Israelis claimed there were arms in it. In my view the best thing would be to go on the ground first.

Director Colby: It gives the task of providing to the UN. The Israelis will inspect it.

Secretary Sisco: They wouldn't be able to argue that military arms were being flown in.

Admiral Moorer: They could set it up as a humanitarian thing.

Secretary Kissinger: But the Israelis will screw up the roads.

General Scowcroft: They will open all the boxes.

Secretary Kissinger: Of the hundred vehicles in the initial convoy, one week later only 90 have gotten through. Even if Clements were running it, they wouldn't have done better. [Laughter]

Secretary Schlesinger: He will go along with policy.

Secretary Kissinger: What you're saying is that when the Deputy Secretary screws up he is doing it by design. [Laughter]

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

12

Secretary Schlesinger: Of course, We could also do it with an LST.

Secretary Kissinger: I prefer to keep the choice either ground or the air. It breaks it once and for all.

Secretary Schlesinger: It is cleaner.

Secretary Kissinger: I am concerned about flat tires etc. Once the Israelis decide to be ornery, it will be a mess. I believe the airlift would be cleaner. [To Sisco] Let's have two draft resolutions: one with airlift the other with ground.

Director Colby: Sea is a possibility.

Secretary Kissinger: But the name of the game is to keep the Egyptians still wanting more.

Director Colby: But do we really want them resupplied?

Secretary Kissinger: Just enough to keep body and soul together. The airlift has enough capacity but it isn't large. We want them to keep needing us. The Egyptians have the POWs and they will use the prisoner issue.

Secretary Schlesinger: We should also note that the Israelis have a big cost staying mobilized. By January, when we push for withdrawal, they will be in a painful economic state.

Secretary Kissinger: It certainly seems to me that if we fight the big battle with Israel on the October 22 line, it really gets us nowhere.

Admiral Moorer: They will never know where the line was, just somewhere north of the road. Everything was in motion at the time.

Secretary Scholesinger: On the bigger issue, each week, each month, the economic situation will be worse.

Secretary Kissinger: That's one of the reasons why I do not want to move until January. If Sadat trusts us, our program is best for him, if he can stand the heat. When I gave this program to the Egyptian Foreign Minister, his

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

13

eyes lit up. Who will tell Rush? I guess you should, Brent. You should also hold regular meetings, at least fifteen minutes a day, and go over things like public affairs guidance.

Secretary Schlesinger: We will stop the airlift on November 6.

Admiral Moorer: I will write up a message stopping it when I get back from this meeting.

Secretary Kissinger: No. We don't want it to get out. You shouldn't do anything yet. End it on the night of the 6th.

Secretary Schlesinger: Why don't we run it through the 7th? Then you could sell it to Sadat.

Secretary Kissinger: Right. I could say, if you agree I will have it ended tonight. That's better.

Secretary Schlesinger: We will do so.

Secretary Kissinger: But for now we should act as if we were going to go on forever. Then we will cut it off on Wednesday.

Secretary Sisco: With regard to the UN, we should have a two-part plan. We could come in with a second resolution on airlift. It would be a two-stage operation.

Secretary Kissinger: Who introduces the resolution?

Secretary Sisco: The U.S.

Secretary Kissinger: We could have the U.S. introduce it, and tell the Soviets what we are going to do.

General Scowcroft: That would keep it clean.

Secretary Sisco: In this way the first stage resolution would give the Israelis time to react. In the second stage we would hit the airlift angle.

Secretary Kissinger: What if the Soviets come in with helos?

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

14

Director Colby: The UN has already passed a resolution about no great powers.

Secretary Kissinger: What if the Soviets tag it on to the first resolution? I guess we can say we don't reject it in principle. We would give the Israelis twenty-four hours and then implement. Brent [to Scowcroft], this will be your problem: Scali will be under pressure for variations. He will have to hang tough, just as he has on the composition of forces issue. Scali will play the game, but he will be in the cockpit.

There should be no indication of displeasure with the Israelis in the next few days. We should not mention a deadlock or anything. We should let them take us on. We should let them worry about what we will do. On supply talks we should just screw it up by not being available. There should be no statement that we have stopped supplies. Maybe we will need it in January. It should be a non-cutoff.

Admiral Moorer: We have laid the ground work for that.

Secretary Kissinger: Yes. They got the point. You said there were three criteria, one of them being national policy. You got their attention on that. You also mentioned time and the fact that inventories were low.

Admiral Moorer: We did mention time pressure. We will be able to filibuster them and not make additional commitments.

Secretary Kissinger: We want this to fit into the disengagement scheme.

Secretary Schlesinger: From Sadat's point of view this will be OK, if he can take the heat.

Secretary Kissinger: Sadat's proposal is that Egypt stay in its current enclaves on the East Bank, and that there be a DMZ some thirty miles east of that. The UN would be put in the DMZ with the Israelis on the other side.

Secretary Schlesinger: Beyond the passes?

Secretary Kissinger: It goes east of the passes, but the Israelis don't have to accept it. It has the advantage that the Egyptians don't follow when the Israelis withdraw; the UN does. The Egyptians are not ten kilometers beyond the Canal, but the UN force is.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

15

Director Colby: It would be something like the 67 two-part formula.

Secretary Kissinger: In the second phase, . . . but we do not need to think about that now. The old Israeli argument that there could be no Arab forces across the Canal is a non-argument now. The Israelis know whenever the Egyptians wanted to move they could move. If they could move against the Bar Lev line they could certainly move against their present position. We are at the stage where the Israelis might be better off back at the passes. The UN would be between them and the Egyptians and the Egyptian zone would have limits on it. For one thing there would be no SAM belt. If the Egyptians decided to move into the UN area, it would take several weeks to get the UN out. In that time the Israelis could get mobilized. From a security point of view it seems better to me than the direct confrontation that they had before, with the Egyptians protected by the SAM belt. That, in any case, is what we would head for after January 1. They understand what I am trying to do in Cairo, and Jidda.

Ambassador McCloskey: You are going to Riyadh?

Secretary Kissinger: Which one is on the coast?

Ambassador McCloskey: Jidda. You will love Riyadh [said sarcastically]. Do you realize that Helen Thomas will be the only woman in the party.

Secretary Kissinger: Only McCloskey could have gotten together Helen Thomas, Marvin Kalb, and Murray Marder. I am really looking forward to those sour faces. We will be able to hold Jewish services in the rear of the plane. You only need ten.

Admiral Moorer: I think in January we will be able to get Congressional support.

Secretary Kissinger: The other day Javits told me he had seen the head lady and he did not understand why I was not in favor of release of POWs since I fought so hard for them in connection with Vietnam. I explained the situation to him and he said, we have got to get her out of this country and get a professional in here. I think we would be nuts to spill blood on the October 22 issue. There would be no new commitment.

Secretary Schlesinger: We don't want to win the Egyptians and lose the Saudis.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

16

Secretary Kissinger: I had things set with the Egyptians, even for reopening diplomatic relations. The Saudis then would not have to be in front and this would be good for them. I will give you a full report after I have talked to them. By the way, I was impressed with Herman Eilts. He thinks the King will understand. If the Israelis had played ball with us, we would have upgraded our interests section in Cairo to Ambassadorial level.

Secretary Sisco: And we should do the same here. They need a higher level representative in Washington.

Secretary Kissinger: It was all set. If Sadat can stand the heat, this week will have been useful. We started out with tactics for handling the present situation and came out with a strategy for the period through April. If the Israelis are at all pliable now, we could perhaps do something. But I want no confrontation with the Israelis now. We should let them start the fight.

By the way, the British are complaining about our fleet. They say if they have to give us help, they want to know what we want it for. They are complaining about our request for RAF cover.

Admiral Moorer: All we talked about was Diego Garcia and some tanker services.

Secretary Kissinger: But what have you asked of the RAF?

Admiral Moorer: Nothing.

Secretary Kissinger: Heath is treating it as a major diplomatic event, claiming that he didn't know anything about it. The British want a formal briefing.

Admiral Moorer: We can do that. All we have told them is that we are moving to the Arabian Sea to establish a presence. We may need some flights for mail and critical spare parts. We can do that just as well from Iran. If the Soviets send a cruiser and other fleet elements from Vladivostok, we might want to put two or three P-3s into Diego Garcia to keep an eye on them.

Secretary Schlesinger: Will that cause Congressional troubles? Don't they think that base is mainly for communications?

Admiral Moorer: When I testified in 1969 as CNO, I told them that we would want to operate more fully out of there from time to time.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE



TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

17

Secretary Kissinger: The U.S. may stop being a world power but the U.S. Navy will never. You are the only ones with long-range plans.

Admiral Moorer: I will go over this with the British in the morning.

Secretary Schlesinger: Why are the British complaining?

Secretary Kissinger: They are just showing they can be ornery. They say they meet every request we make. Without full consultation U.S. unilateralism can get them in trouble.

Admiral Moorer: All we asked for were those minor things.

Secretary Kissinger: Rush will tell them.

Secretary Schlesinger: We could hold up.

Secretary Kissinger: I don't think it is worth it.

Admiral Moorer: All we would use it for would be for mail and maritime patrols.

Secretary Schlesinger: Why not use Iran?

Admiral Moorer: I am not sure we can make it from there.

Secretary Schlesinger: Sure, we could fly aircraft from Thailand to Iran.

Secretary Kissinger: I will tell Rush then that this is not for strategic help. It is just for technical help and mail. Admiral Moorer will explain it to them. When we talk to them we can do it in an aloof way, and say we will do whatever they want us to. We initiated the requests at a lower level.

Secretary Schlesinger: If we are only talking about a mail plane, why did Heath want to know?

Admiral Moorer: They have never acted like this before.

25X1

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

18

Secretary Kissinger: This is the only thing we asked?

Secretary Schlesinger: They are only being ornery.

Secretary Kissinger: Usually when their Prime Minister instructs them to protest, it has to do with major events not just something done on technical levels.

Secretary Schlesinger: We should say to heck with you.

Secretary Kissinger: Lets let Cromer talk to Rush.

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Secretary Kissinger: No.

[Note: The time was 12:30 p.m. and Dr. Kissinger left the meeting briefly to make a telephone call.]

Secretary Schlesinger: Is it your intention to invite the Shah to visit the Hancock. It seems like a good idea. And King Faisal as well.

Secretary Kissinger: Can I extend the invitations to them while I am there? Will the ship be in the vicinity?

Secretary Schlesinger: We will have them there.

Secretary Kissinger: We sent a message last night on the Hancock.

Ambassador McCloskey: That is the one that I checked on.

Secretary Schlesinger: I assume we should be low keyed on the press line about the Hancock. What about putting it into the Persian Gulf?

Secretary Kissinger: I will ask the Shah. Who else really matters?

Secretary Schlesinger: What about Faisal? You could get the sense as to whether to ask him or not.

Secretary Kissinger: My instinct is that the King would say no.

Secretary Schlesinger: Then don't ask.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

19

Secretary Kissinger: I can ask whether he wants to go. That is easy.

Admiral Moorer: You can make your decision after you see Faisal. If all goes well, you can ask him.

Secretary Kissinger: But I will not ask him about the ship going into the Persian Gulf. I don't want to establish the principle that he can control our movements. The Shah we can ask. We could ask the Shah before it gets there. I will ask the Shah while there if it would help our overall strategy if the carrier steams into the Persian Gulf. We will tell him we would be delighted to have him go aboard. He will have to fly out. I assume that is the only way to get him there.

Admiral Moorer: Right. We could send a boat out with him but it would take two weeks.

Director Colby: You could come into a port.

Admiral Moorer: We could anchor it.

Secretary Kissinger: While I am there I will ask the King if he wants to visit it.

[Note: There was then a slight digression in the conversation to discuss such delicacies as sheeps' eyes and the head of the Peking Duck which is reserved for the guest of honor.]

Admiral Moorer: If things go well, you may not want to ask the Shah.

Secretary Kissinger: He may be pleased by the airlift. It will have been stopped the previous night. On the airlift we should just say the emergency is no longer there. Don't say it is being replaced by other things.

Secretary Schlesinger: With the Saudis you will have to make the point that they are making a mistake by driving the U. S. to the wall.

Secretary Kissinger: I will just say that directly to them. I am not smart enough to be subtle.

Secretary Schlesinger: What do we say to the British at The Hague. We don't know what we are getting out of the alliance?

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

20

Secretary Kissinger: You can give that as a Schlesinger opinion but not the official position of the United States. They are milking us in the service of a policy which is no longer cooperative.

Joe, [to Sisco] are you comfortable with where we stand?

Secretary Sisco: There are still two things that bother me. With regard to the disengagement phase, Sadat is not going to want to disagree per se without the link of where we go at the end of the line. He can't accept disengagement as an end in itself.

Secretary Kissinger: The trick will be to keep that fuzzed up.

Secretary Sisco: With regard to the sweetened version, minimal program, if Sadat comes back with anything it may provide a basis for going back to the Israelis. I don't disagree with October 22 but January is a long time away from Sadat's point of view. He may need something.

Secretary Kissinger: Then we will be in the UN.

Secretary Sisco: Well that is sensible and a position which is consistent with Resolutions 338 and 339.

Secretary Kissinger: If Sadat holds out until January, that will be a trap for the Israelis in the UN context and that will lead to disengagement.

Director Colby: But Sadat needs the appearance of motion.

Secretary Kissinger: If the Israeli package won't fly, my trip may fail. Then the Israelis will tackle us and force us to support them. That is what I am trying to prevent.

Secretary Sisco: They want the status quo ante situation. They haven't learned anything from this recent experience.

Secretary Kissinger: I told them they lost the war. She said they won. I said you won the battle but lost the diplomatic war.

Secretary Schlesinger: Why did she stay over?

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

21

Secretary Kissinger: What we had talked about on Friday was disapproved by the Cabinet. They wanted a new package. I told her the Friday package barely had a chance and there was no sense going on. There was absolutely no flexibility last night. She argued that the blockade was a violation of the ceasefire but violating the October 22 lines was OK. She said, you say go back to October 22 but why should we. She claims it is an attack on her sovereignty.

Secretary Sisco: She was at her worst.

Secretary Kissinger: Right. She had been great the night before, but last night was like the mad hatter's tea party. It was worse than with the Vietnamese and we have a much more severe domestic problem here.

Secretary Schlesinger: They have no support from the House. Once the silent majority gets cold, the Israelis will find they have little support.

Secretary Kissinger: If they were smart they would have played our game rather than putting themselves in hock to Egypt. It is hard to image the scenario in which there would be enough of a crisis to move them back from the October 22 line to the Canal. They are in the syndrome of why disturb the situation when everyone is happy. It is going to be tougher for us now. It could blow up my trip. One thing it has done is clarify my thinking. But that won't necessarily help.

Secretary Schlesinger: They must recognize the strategic defeat which they have suffered.

Secretary Kissinger: I told my thinking to the Egyptian Foreign Minister. He didn't say, you SOB. He understood. Whether Sadat will be willing or not is another thing. [To Schlesinger] I will send you something back Wednesday night or Thursday, but only you are to see it.

Secretary Schlesinger: We will work out a fail safe system.

What about the approach to the Germans? I told our visitor we must have access to things if they are prepositioned. He agrees.

I want to see the Turk Ambassador and see if we can get this early warning situation straightened out.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

22

Secretary Kissinger: What is it?

Secretary Schlesinger: DOD screwed it up I am afraid.

Secretary Kissinger: As the academic level of this group has risen, I have noticed that the choice of words has declined.

Secretary Schlesinger: We have abused the Turks. It is good to get the problem solved.

Secretary Kissinger: Take it easy on the French. Who all will be there?

Admiral Moorer: The Italians, the Netherlands, and the Germans.

Secretary Schlesinger: All the good guys except for the British.

Admiral Moorer: Some of our ships have been at sea for a long time due to this exercise before the crisis. Also, we need to save some fuel. I would like to propose that we put some of them into Greek ports. They will be available on six to eight hours notice. While you are in China, we would have them all out to sea again.

Secretary Kissinger: I think that is a good idea.

Secretary Schlesinger: And we will phase them down as the Soviet fleet levels go down.

Admiral Moorer: We have to take some long-term conservation steps if we are going to keep our fleet levels up through January.

Secretary Kissinger: We won't need them that long for the Israelis.

Admiral Moorer: What I would propose would be to let about one-third of them anchor.

Secretary Schlesinger: What about the Marines?

Secretary Kissinger: There shouldn't be any redeployment until after my trip.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

23

Admiral Moorer: But we could let half of them anchor.

Secretary Schlesinger: The whole Department of Defense is down on fuel levels

Admiral Moorer: It will take us a little time to redirect the flow of oil. We would like to gain some time before we get down to the war reserve position.

Secretary Kissinger: Is it their first cut-off or the more recent actions which are cutting into your situation?

Director Colby: It is not the reductions, it is the embargo that is hurting.

Admiral Moorer: Now Faisal is going to do an audit trail on oil to the refineries. We are going to have trouble getting fuel for Vietnam and Cambodia.

Director Colby: The reduction the Arabs might have done anyway without the war in the Middle East.

Secretary Kissinger: Then it is the embargo which hurts?

Secretary Schlesinger: It is the audit trail which will really give us troubles.

Secretary Kissinger: The Israelis have made it easy for us.

Director Colby: I have tried to scare them with the Soviet angle.

Secretary Kissinger: Keep me informed.

Secretary Schlesinger: Do you have any reaction to the Israelis bad manners with regard to providing us with captured equipment?

Admiral Moorer: They have the immediate requirement, not us. They are really cutting off their nose spite their face.

Secretary Kissinger: I would be cool and not show that they are getting to us. Don't cut them off completely. We have to have something to come back from.

Admiral Moorer: If they bring up the point in Cairo that our reconnaissance photos permitted the Israelis to break through, you might answer that the timing was after the Israeli breakthrough occurred.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE

24

Secretary Kissinger: I don't mind them thinking that we are a tough enemy.

Secretary Sisco: Right. I think our actions impressed them.

[The meeting then broke up.]

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE